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ABSTRACT

The 1974 Distinguished Achievement Awards Entry from St. Peter's College, Jersey City, New Jersey is Project Pyramid, a 3-year tutorial, field experience program which provides two different groups of college, high school, and elementary school students with the opportunity to work together in a teaching-learning situation. Twenty St. Peter's College students are each assigned to tutor two high school students. Each high school student is then assigned to tutor two elementary school students under the supervision of the college student supervisor. The college students attend a seminar in which they analyze and discuss problems arising from the tutoring experience. A learning center, containing elementary and secondary level materials, is available to all participants. There is a trained senior education major at the center to assist college students in selecting material for themselves and their high school tutors. Preliminary test data show an increase of 4 months in reading and 2 months in mathematics for elementary school students and an increase of 9 months in reading and 4 months in mathematics for high school students. (Four tables of data along with a one-page budget are included.) (BRB)

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Comprehensive Explanation And Analysis Of Project Pyramid

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SP 007 511

Background

The Department of Education at Saint Peter's College has always tried to maintain an appropriate balance of course preparation and field experience in its programs of teacher education. Recent statements from the New Jersey State Department of Education have served to encourage colleges in New Jersey to place more emphasis on field experiences than ever before. In addition, the New Jersey State Department of Education asked New Jersey colleges to develop and implement "Innovative Teacher-Training Programs."

In response, Dr. Patrick Caulfield and Professor James Jacobson developed "Project Pyramid." Project Pyramid is a tutorial, field experience program that has as its primary goal the granting of tutorial teaching experience to undergraduates enrolled in teacher education programs at Saint Peter's College.

Overview

Project Pyramid is a three year program that provides for two different groups of college, high school, and elementary school students to work together and learn from each other.

Twenty Saint Peter's College students are each assigned to tutor two high school students. Each high school student is then assigned to tutor two elementary school students under the supervision of his "college student" instructor.

Each group of students takes part in the program for a two year period. The two groups overlap during the second year of the program. Each group is under the direction of a separate supervisor and contains a different team of students.

Personnel and Goals

Supervisor (Group I). The supervisor is a graduate student in education. He is hired during the first semester of the program. His first responsibility is to recruit students from the college who will participate in the program for the next three semesters. In addition, he assists administrators and teachers from the participating high schools and elementary schools in selecting students for participation in the program. During the remaining three semesters, he is responsible to visit the high schools and elementary schools where the tutoring is being conducted and to supervise all aspects and all levels of teaching.

Supervisor (Group II). This supervisor is hired during the third semester of the program. His duties and responsibilities are the same as the supervisor for Group I.

College Student. Twenty college students are chosen for each of the two groups participating in the program. All students volunteer for the program. They are not assigned to the program unless they have freely chosen to participate. Every student who wishes to be considered for the program must meet certain criteria. He must have completed two of five basic education courses required for state certification.

He must be in either the second or third year of college. He must register his intention to complete all requirements toward state certification and he must be interviewed by the supervisor of his group before he is accepted.

All students who are accepted register for the course "Field Experience in Education." They receive three semester hour credits toward both certification and graduation. After three semesters they will have received nine credits. As members of this class they meet in a seminar with a college instructor from the Department of Education and their supervisor. Seminars are used to discuss problems arising in the schools as well as for structuring the tutoring of the high school and elementary school students.

Each of the twenty college students is assigned to tutor two high school students for two and one-half hours per week. All tutoring is done at the high school building. College students receive traveling expenses for this activity but are not paid.

In addition, since each of the high school students is assigned to tutor two elementary school students, the college student is assigned to supervise that aspect of the program. This tutoring is conducted at the elementary school for two hours per week. The college student receives $2.50 per hour for supervision.

In all tutoring relationships the college student has available to him the full resources of the High Intensity Learning Center established for this program (See Appendix I).

In addition, the college student is assigned during the summer months to act as a tutor to the high school students in the program who are attending Saint Peter's College.

Goals (College Student).

1. The college students will have the unique opportunity in their sophomore and junior years to put to use their theoretical knowledge in a practical teaching experience.
2. They will gain experience in actual teaching.
3. They will begin to realize the different types of problems faced by students at a high school and elementary school level.
4. They will gain valuable experience in coping with different learning situations.

High School Student. Forty high school students are chosen for each of the two groups participating in the program. Two high schools within a five mile radius of Saint Peter's College are providing students for the program. The schools are North Bergen High School, North Bergen, N.J. and Union Hill High School, Union City, N.J.

Students are chosen by interview with the Guidance Departments in each school, teachers in the high schools, administrators, and the Supervisor. Special consideration is given to students considered "average." One of our goals is to interest students of average ability into entering college.

Two high school students were assigned to one college student. These two students would receive tutorial help in subjects that were proving to be difficult for them. They would be tutored for two and one-half hours per week.

In addition, each of the high school students is assigned to two elementary school students. They are assigned to tutor these elementary school students for two hours per week. All tutoring is done at the elementary school and

the high school student is paid at the rate of $1.50 per hour to accomplish this tutoring. All tutoring at this level is supervised by the college student.

In addition, Saint Peter's College invites each high school student to enroll at the college for six credits of college level courses during each of two summers. High school students do not pay for these credits. The twelve credits they receive can be used for advanced standing if the student enters Saint Peter's College after graduation or can be transferred to accepting colleges.

College students are assigned as tutors to the high school students during these summer programs to insure a more successful college experience for them.

Goals (High School Student).

1. Secondary school students are exposed early in their high school careers to a tutorial program tailored to effectively meet their individual needs and correct deficiencies in academic areas.
2. Each secondary school student has the opportunity to experience college courses for credit. It is hoped this will encourage them to continue their education after high school.
3. The sense of responsibility and achievement fostered in the students by the tutoring experience will encourage personality development and confidence.

Elementary School Student. Eighty elementary school students are chosen for each of the two groups participating in the program. Two elementary schools within a one-quarter mile radius of the participating high schools were chosen. They are Robert Fulton School, North Bergen, N.J. and Washington School, Union City, N.J.

Students are chosen by the classroom teacher, building principal and supervisor of the program. Assignment to the program is done mainly on the needs of the students and their ability to benefit from an individual tutorial experience.

Two elementary school students are assigned to one high school student. They receive tutoring assistance for two hours per week. All tutoring is done at the elementary school building.

The college student is available to assist either or both of the two high school students and also to directly teach one or all of the elementary school students if necessary or to demonstrate technique. In addition, the supervisor is available to directly teach to demonstrate technique to the college or high school students.

Goals (Elementary School Student).

1. An increase of their academic skills through the tutorial assistance given by the high school and college students.
2. The elementary school teachers obtain the assistance of the college and high school students in meeting the needs of their students for individualized instruction.

College Expertise. Dr. Patrick Caulfield, Chairman of the Department of Education and Mr. James Jacobson, Assistant Professor of Education are non-salaried consultants to the program. They are available to assist in any way.

Budget

Supervisor, Group I $5.00 per hour for 1,130 hours over a 2 year period.....	5,650.00
Supervisor, Group II $5.00 per hour for 1,025 hours over a 2 year period.....	5,125.00
Secretary (part time).....	3,000.00
Salary of College Students to Supervise Tutoring of Elementary Students	9,500.00
Traveling Expenses	3,700.00
Salary of High School Students to Tutor Elementary Students.....	9,420.00
College Credit for Courses	46,080.00
Summer Tutors	1,250.00
High Intensity Learning Center - Materials and Supplies	7,500.00
Accounting and Payroll Services	2,976.00
Total:	$94,201.00

Evaluation Procedures and Data

In June, 1973 Project Pyramid completed the first year of a projected three year program. Final test data is not available at this time. However, preliminary data is available and is included with this report.

All elementary and secondary students enrolled in the program were administered appropriate levels of both the California Reading Test and the California Arithmetic Test. Pre-tests were administered during late January to early February, 1973. Post-test scores were obtained in early May, 1973.

Table I indicates that all elementary school students showed an increase in reading test scores, as a grade, of at least four months. The duration of the tutorial program for the 1972-1973 academic year was actually three and one-half months. Where all of the students continue to remain below their actual grade placement some progress has been made to alleviate the discrepancy.

As shown in Table II, all grades except the eighth showed an increase in arithmetic test scores. While the gain was not as great as the gain in reading scores, it is encouraging to us and the teachers involved.

Tables III and IV indicate that the high school students also were able to increase their reading and arithmetic test scores. Similar to the elementary grade students, reading showed more of an increase than arithmetic.

Table I

California Reading Test Administration to Elementary School Students Enrolled in Project Pyramid.

Grade	N	Pre-test	Post-test	Difference
2	7	1.8	2.2	+ 4 months
3	8	2.5	2.9	+ 4 months
4	14	3.2	3.6	+ 4 months
5	15	4.5	5.0	+ 5 months
6	12	5.2	5.7	+ 5 months
7	12	5.9	6.4	+ 5 months
8	12	6.0	6.5	+ 5 months
		Ave:4.4	4.8	+ 4 months

Table II

California Arithmetic Test Administration to Elementary School Students Enrolled in Project Pyramid.

Grade	N	Pre-test	Post-test	Difference
2	7	1.9	2.1	+ 2 months
3	8	2.3	2.4	+ 1 month
4	14	3.4	3.7	+ 3 months
5	15	4.5	4.8	+ 3 months
6	12	5.1	5.3	+ 2 months
7	12	6.0	6.1	+ 1 month
8	12	5.9	5.9	NONE
		Ave: 4.3	4.5	+ 2 months

Table III

California Reading Test Administration to Secondary School Students Enrolled in Project Pyramid.

Grade	N		Pre-test	Post-test	Difference
10	29		11.1	12.0	+ 9 months
11	11		12.2	13.1	+ 9 months
		Ave:	11.4	12.3	+ 9 months

Table IV

California Arithmetic Test Administration to Secondary School Students Enrolled in Project Pyramid.

Grade	N		Pre-test	Post-test	Difference
10	29		11.3	11.7	+ 4 months
11	11		12.5	12.8	+ 3 months
		Ave:	11.6	12.0	+ 4 months

Contributions of Program to the Improvement of Teacher Education

A teacher education program that emphasises either college course work or practical, field experiences to the exclusion of the other is more than likely prohibiting its students from attaining a well balanced foundation in preparation for classroom teaching.

Project Pyramid presents those students who have completed basic teacher-preparation courses with an opportunity to apply their "book learning" to a tutorial teacher-student relationship. By restricting entrance to the program to those students who are at an appropriate level of educational maturity, balance between course work and field experience can be maintained.

In the actual tutorial situation the teacher trainee has an opportunity to perform many of the same functions as a classroom teacher but with fewer students. This experience can easily lead directly to the student teaching experience.

By working with a small number of students, the teacher trainee can establish a very positive personal relationship which is a benefit to both him and his students.

By working in actual classrooms and school buildings, the teacher trainee can observe first hand the workings of schools and experience the day to day problems teachers face in dealing with students.

The teacher trainee is also responsible for planning an individual curriculum for each of his high school students and supervising the curriculum plans for the elementary school students. In carrying out this function the teacher

trainee must become familiar with various materials available in the Learning Center. In addition, when material is not available for certain skills the trainee must be capable of producing and creating his own material.

The seminars attended by all teacher trainees in the program gives them the opportunity to present learning or management problems to the instructor or their peers for consideration. This also provides an opportunity whereby the trainee can almost immediately bring possible solutions to these problems back to the teaching-learning situation. The immediate feedback he receives can be beneficial to his growth and development.

Appendix I
High Intensity Learning Center

The High Intensity Learning Center was established at Saint Peter's College by the Department of Education as part of Project Pyramid. The Learning Center, housed in the classroom building at the college, contains $7500.00 worth of elementary and secondary level materials. In addition, the Random House Systems Components are available to assist students in structuring a completely individualized reading and mathematics program for all elementary and secondary students enrolled in the program.

In the tutoring of the high school students, the college students are instructed to make use of the materials available in the Center. When the high school students tutor the elementary school students, the college student acts as the messenger to obtain materials from the Learning Center and bring them to the high school student for his use in his own tutoring.

The college students receive additional training as part of their seminar in the uses and workings of the Learning Center. In addition, a part-time, specially trained senior education major is available in the Learning Center at specific hours to assist the teacher trainee in the selection of materials for his own use or the use of his high school students.

Also the program supervisor as well as all members of the Department of Education are available to assist in the selection of materials.

It is also interesting to note that all students at Saint Peter's College are encouraged to use the Learning Center in any tutoring they might be doing. In this way a college student who is tutoring a brother or a sister or a neighbor's son or daughter for experience or money can use the facilities, materials and expertise, of the Learning Center.

All education majors also use the facilities of the Learning Center in connection with course work at the college.

Summary

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Project Pyramid is a three-year tutorial, field experience program that provides for two different groups of college, high school, and elementary school students to work together in a teacher-learner situation.

One teacher trainee, two high school students and four elementary school students work as a unit. There are twenty units currently in the program with an additional twenty units set to be included shortly.

The teacher trainee tutors the high school students in any deficiencies diagnosed as the result of testing initiated at the beginning of the program. Each high school student in turn tutors two elementary school students under the direct supervision of the teacher trainee. The teacher trainee is paid to supervise the tutoring of the elementary school student by the high school student. The high school student is paid to tutor the elementary school student.

In addition to the tutoring, the teacher trainees are enrolled in a seminar at the college. The purpose of the seminar is to discuss, analyze, and comment on problems and situations that arise in the tutoring experience. A college instructor is available for the seminar.

A Learning Center containing materials from over one-hundred publishers, as well as a Center-aide, is available to provide materials and suggestions for all levels of tutoring.

All forty high school students are encouraged to attend Saint Peter's College and enroll for twelve credits of college-level courses, without charge, over two summers.

Preliminary test data available indicates improvements have taken place in both mathematics and reading for both elementary and secondary level students.